

111 N. County Farm Rd., Wheaton, IL 60187

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public Health Emergency Declaration Ends May 11

What it Means for DuPage County

DuPage County - The federal and state governments today May 11, 2023, are ending Public Health Emergency (PHE) declarations that have been in place since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The end of the PHE demonstrates that we are in a much better place in our response than we were three years ago with many more tools available to protect our community including testing, vaccines, and treatments. The end of the PHE does not mean the virus is no longer a threat. COVID-19 remains a leading cause of death in the United States.

The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented public health and societal challenges lasting more than three years and causing nearly 300,000 COVID-19 cases and 2,027 deaths in DuPage County since 2020.

Being up to date with COVID-19 vaccines continues to be one of the most important ways to help protect you from severe illness, hospitalization, and death. The most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show people ages 18 years and older and vaccinated with an updated booster had a 6x lower risk of dying from COVID-19 compared to people who were not vaccinated.

Over the past three years, the DuPage County Health Department and partners throughout the county led the largest vaccination program in history and helped nearly 80% (734,674) of DuPage County residents complete their primary COVID-19 vaccination series.

“DuPage County continues to be a leader with one of the highest COVID-19 vaccination rates in the state, this was really “Our Shot DuPage.” said Karen Ayala, Executive Director, DuPage County Health Department. “I offer heartfelt thanks today to all DCHD staff, healthcare partners, community members, and residents for their tireless efforts and ongoing commitment to the well-being of all DuPage County residents.”

[What does the end of the PHE mean?](#)

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “most tools, like vaccines, treatments, and testing, will remain available. But, some tools, like certain data sources and reporting, will change.”

-More-

Media Inquiries:

(630) 221-7374
media@dupagehealth.org

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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

- **Vaccines:** The U.S. government is currently distributing free COVID-19 vaccines for all adults and children regardless of insurance coverage.
- **Testing:** Insurance providers will no longer be required to waive costs or provide free COVID-19 tests. [CDC's No Cost COVID-19 Testing Locator](#) can help people find current community and pharmacy partners participating in the [Increasing Community Access to Testing \(ICATT\) program](#).
- **Treatments:** Medication to prevent severe COVID-19, such as Paxlovid, will remain available for free while supplies last. After that, the price will be determined by the medication manufacturer and your health insurance coverage. COVID-19 treatments may then require a copay.

The DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) currently provides:

- Free COVID-19 vaccinations, boosters, and in-home vaccinations.
- Test kits and high-quality masks for select organizations to distribute to vulnerable and high-risk populations.
- Information and education about COVID threats and prevention on our website and social media channels. For more information, visit www.dupagehealth.org/covid19.

CDC continues to advise everyone [stay up to date](#) on COVID-19 vaccinations, use at-home tests if they've been exposed or have symptoms, stay home if they're sick, and seek medical attention if their symptoms are worsening. Wearing a high-quality mask and increasing ventilation are also ways to protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19 and other illnesses.

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